

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are pending. In the present amendment, Claims 1, 3, and 6-15 are currently amended and new Claim 16 is added. Support for the present amendment can be found in the original specification, for example, at page 9, line 14 to page 11, line 20, at page 18, line 14 to page 20, line 24, in Figures 1-5, and in Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the abstract was objected to; Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; and Claims 9-15 were allowed. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claims 9-15 are allowed.

In response to the objection to the abstract, a new abstract is submitted herewith that includes a single paragraph in compliance with MPEP 608.01(b). Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the abstract be withdrawn.

Further, it is noted that the specification is also amended to remove references to the claim numbers in the background section. Additionally, the brief description of the drawings is amended to include a description of Figure 7E. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Applicants note that Claim 1 is drafted in *means-plus-function* format according to 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph.

In rejecting Claims 1-8 as indefinite, the Office Action cites MPEP 2114 for the proposition that “[p]roducts must distinguish over the prior art in terms of the structure...rather than function alone.” However, Applicants note that the first paragraph of

MPEP 2114 guides the reader to MPEP 2181-2186 to interpret the functional portion of means-plus-function limitations.

MPEP 2181 states that one of the requirements for a claim to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph is that “the phrase ‘means for’...must not be modified by sufficient structure, material, or acts for achieving the specified function.” Thus, the requirement by the Office Action to include structure in the claim itself would completely vitiate 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1, and all claims dependent thereon, properly recite means-plus-function limitations under 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph in accordance with MPEP 2181-2186. Further, the “capable of” language is removed from the claims to more clearly recite the function performed by the recited means. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claims 9-15 are hereby amended to remove the “step of language” and to fix improper multiple dependencies. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

New Claim 16 is added by the present amendment. Support for Claim 16 can be found in the original specification, for example, at page 9, line 14 to page 11, line 20, at page 18, line 14 to page 20, line 24, in Figures 1-5, and in Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

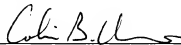
Further, it is noted that Claim 16 structurally defines the features of the system. Thus, Claim 16 is not intended to invoke 35 U.S.C. § 112, sixth paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the structure recited in Claim 16 is allowable.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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